

# IRAQI DESTINY

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## Civil Affairs brings light back to Baghdad

By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis  
22nd MPAD

The help the Iraqi people are receiving from the coalition forces is not what some may think. They're not only receiving food, water and medical assistance, but they're also coordinating the establishment of a stable government to ensure order within the region.

402nd Civil Affairs Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Christopher Holshek said the tribal leaders in An Nasiriya are looking forward to a new lease on life.

"People are already telling us their biggest problem in An Nasiriya is not food and water. It may not even be getting the electricity put on," Holshek said. "The shorter and longer term problem is the lack of a police force. Law and order is definitely going to be the challenge in the out months and maybe the out years."

The ultimate goal of the coalition is to give the country back to the Iraqi people, and empower them to rebuild not only their infrastructure, but their social services as well.

Since we don't have a large amount of dislocated civilians and collateral damage as a result of the military involvement in Iraq, nor have we the required amount of humanitarian intervention that was predicted, we can move more quickly into reconstruction, Holshek said. We can stabilize the lives of the Iraqi people by helping restore their water supplies and electricity, by

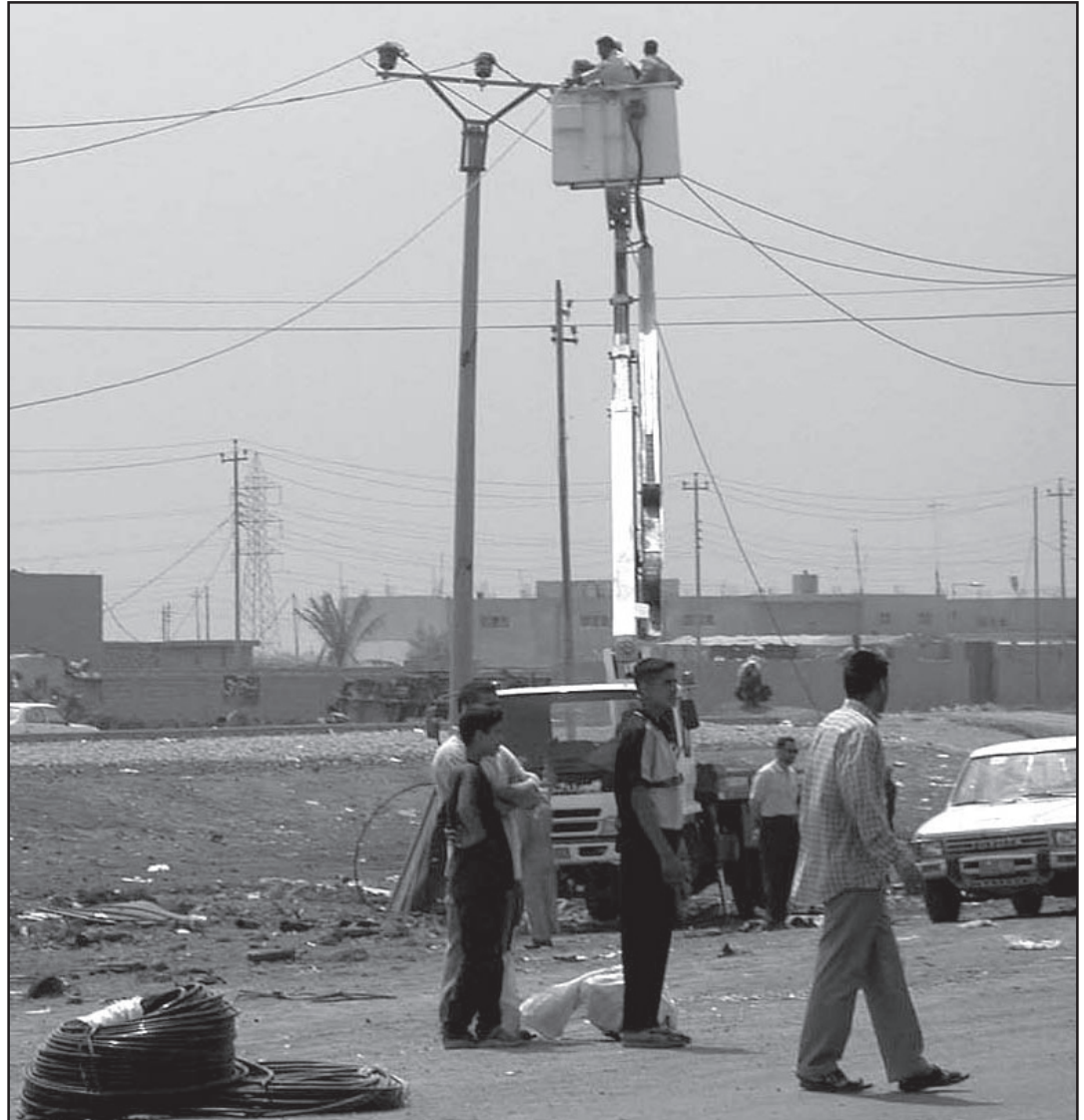


Photo By: Spc. Blake Kent

Work begins in the streets of southern Baghdad to restore water and electricity to the people. Army Civil Affairs is conducting operations such as this throughout Iraq, returning a few comforts to the population, and helping the citizens return to a more stable existence in post-war Iraq.

providing security to allow students to return to their schools, and create jobs by supporting the economy and providing assistance in establishing a stable government.

"My battalion has been like the 'Maytag repairman.' We haven't had a whole lot of work

to do, so that's good news. The (mere) fact that there's not a lot of opportunities for media to go take pictures of starving children being helped by American soldiers is very good news; that means the people that planned this operation have been fortunate enough and have done a good enough

job that we haven't disrupted life here."

As the regime is rapidly removed, civil affairs soldiers must move hastily into the more advanced parts of reconstruction. This will make it easier for coalition forces to leave Iraq and let its people take over in a successful way.



Photo By: Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

2nd Lt. Adam Seibel shows off the craftsmanship of a golden AK-47 found in a Baghdad residence with a number of other weapons connected with the Baath regime.

## Weapons Caches Found, streets of Baghdad safer

By Spc Blake Kent  
22nd MPAD

Coalition forces have uncovered several weapons caches throughout civilian residences in Baghdad, confiscating tons of weaponry.

"Most of this was found in one house. It took us four days to download all the stuff from just that house," said 2nd Lt. Adam Seibel, A Company, 3-15 Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.

"Since then, calls keep coming in for us to go collect up more stuff."

"The house was a strong-hold for the Republican Guard. They used an ordinary civilian (residence) as cover, and would go back and forth and take weapons. They tried to come back a week before we came in, but we got there first," said Seibel a native of Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

Third Infantry Division soldiers make daily trips to collect up truck-loads of weapons turned in by Iraqi citizens.

"We've got 841 AK-47s, 58 gold AKs, 423 bolt action rifles, MP-5s, 37mm anti-aircraft rounds, and a number of crates we haven't even had a chance to open yet," Seibel said. "Most of these came in the packaging, brand new."

In addition to the weapons, which range in origin from Russia, Belgium, Jordan, France, and the United States, large amounts of supporting ammunition were recovered.

"We've got 99 cases of 9mm round ammo, holding 2,000 rounds per case, and 400 cases of 7.62 rounds," Seibel said.

Also found were a number of secret service weapons, including a sophisticated briefcase pistol.

"There are a couple different courses of action (the Army can take), but the decision hasn't been made yet what will happen to all of these (weapons)," Seibel said.

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